

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Solid and Hazardous Materials

Bureau of Hazardous Waste and Radiation Management, 9th Floor

625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-7255

Phone: (518) 402-8579 • FAX: (518) 402-9024

Website: www.dec.state.ny.us

C. Gerwitz



Alexander B. Grannis
Commissioner

APR 17 2007



Ms. Judy Einach
Campaign Director
Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes
19 Penfield Street
Buffalo, New York 14213

Dear Ms. Einach:

This letter is a followup to our discussion regarding the Springville Dam during the March 28, 2007 West Valley Citizens Task Force Meeting. During that meeting the issue of the possible presence of radioactively contaminated sediments behind the Springville Dam was mentioned in the context of a Cattaraugus Creek Watershed Commission Committee discussion on the possibility of removing the dam. I spoke with you and Town of Concord Councilman Bill Snyder during a meeting break and briefly explained the 1995 activities of the DEC Radiation staff at the dam relative to this issue.

Enclosed with this letter is the information that you requested from our 1995 site visit reports. We were involved with this site because the Village of Springville, the owners of the site at that time, needed to dredge sediments from certain limited areas behind the dam and in the turbine spillway. The hydro-power plant was operational at the time and the dredging was needed to allow its continued operation. Given the history of radionuclide contamination of sediments behind the dam from the former Nuclear Fuel Services, commercial spent-fuel reprocessing operations at the Western New York Nuclear Service Center (West Valley), we needed to ensure that any sediments being removed from that area were properly characterized for potential contamination. We visited the site several times between May and September of that year to perform an evaluation of sediment contaminant levels. During preparations for the Town's sediment removal and dam repair operations, a severe thunderstorm passed through the area, washing the majority of the sediment behind the dam downstream through an open gate in the base of the dam. (Note: Following this event, our regional Fish & Wildlife program directed Springville to remove the downstream debris, as well as sediment which was impacting fish in Cattaraugus Creek downstream of the dam.)

Radiation Program staff collected and analyzed sediment samples both before and after this event. The only non-naturally occurring radionuclide that we detected was cesium-137 (Cs-137). The detectable concentrations of Cs-137 were indistinguishable from background values caused by fallout from past atmospheric nuclear testing. As you know, spent-fuel reprocessing

operations at West Valley ended 30 years ago. Thus, the primary source of radionuclide contamination in the creek dates from that period and earlier. The current levels of discharges from Department of Energy operations at West Valley are orders of magnitude below those from NFS operations.

If you have any additional questions regarding this issue please give me a call at (518) 402-8579.

Sincerely,



Timothy B. Rice
Environmental Radiation Specialist II

Enclosure

cc: P. Concannon, DEC, Region 9

TBR/mnj

ecc: w/o enc. C. Gerwitz, NYSERDA
M. Maloney, DOE

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Solid and Hazardous Materials

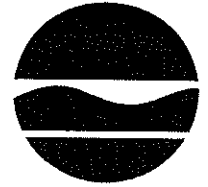
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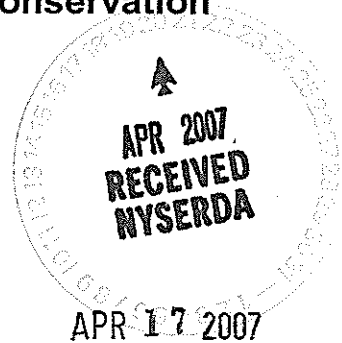
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C. Gerwitz



Alexander B. Grannis
Commissioner



The Honorable Bill Snyder
Councilman, Town Hall
86 Franklin Street
PO Box 368
Springville, NY 14141

Dear Mr. Snyder:

This letter is a followup to our discussion regarding the Springville Dam during the March 28, 2007 West Valley Citizens Task Force meeting. During that meeting the issue of the possible presence of radioactively contaminated sediments behind the Springville Dam was mentioned in the context of a Cattaraugus Creek Watershed Commission committee discussion on the possibility of removing the dam. I spoke with you and Judy Einach of the Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Waste during a meeting break and briefly explained the 1995 activities of the DEC Radiation staff at the dam relative to this issue.

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Mr. Bill Snyder

Page 2

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If you have any additional questions regarding this issue please give me a call at (518) 402-8579.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Timothy B. Rice".

Timothy B. Rice
Environmental Radiation Specialist II

Enclosure

cc: P. Concannon, DEC, Region 9

TBR/mnj

ecc: w/o enclosure

C. Gerwitz, NYSERDA

M. Maloney, DOE

Incoming Mail Response Form

Date Received/By: END 4/20/2007

Letter From Name/Organization: Tim Rice/NYSDEC

Letter To:

<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Attridge, T.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Dueringer, A.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Piciulo, P.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Willet, M.</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Bembia, P.</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Gerwitz, C. (Is cc'd on the letters)</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Sonntag, T.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Williams, J.</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>DeGiglio, E.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mellon, A.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Weishan, M.</u>	

Subject of Letter: Letters: Response to Judy Einach/Coalition and Bill Snyder/Councilman/Springville questions at CTF meeting Re: contamination behind Springville Dam in 1995.

Staff Assigned:

Does this letter require a response?
 Yes
 No
 Not Sure

If yes, what is specific

Due Date:

Comments:

Copy this letter to the following staff:

Hard Copy
 PDF
 Both

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Attridge, T.</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Piciulo, P.</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Central Files-Original</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Brodie, Hal</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Bembia, P.</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Sonntag, T.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>WVSMP</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>fax</u> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>mail</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>DeGiglio, E.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Weishan, M.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Other</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>pdf</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Dueringer, A.</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Willet, M.</u>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Gerwitz, C.</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Williams, J.</u>		
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Mellon, A.</u>			